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Agenda item 100 (b)

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

Austria, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Gabon, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Lesotho, Malta, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, Suriname, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela and Zimbabwe: draft resolution

Decade for Human Rights Education

The General Assembly,

Guided by the fundamental and universal principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1/

Reaffirming article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, according to which "education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms",

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1/ Resolution 217 A (III).

Recalling the provisions of other international human rights instruments, such as those of article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 2/ and article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 3/ that reflect the aims of the aforementioned article,

Taking into account Commission on Human Rights resolution 1993/56 of 9 March 1993, 4/ in which the Commission recommended that knowledge of human rights, both in its theoretical dimension and in its practical application, should be established as a priority in educational policies,

Considering also Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/51 of 4 March 1994, 5/ in which the Commission encouraged the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to include among his specific objectives a plan of action for the United Nations decade for human rights education and invited the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session a plan of action, through the Economic and Social Council, for a decade for human rights education,

Convinced that human rights education should involve more than the provision of information but should rather constitute a comprehensive life-long process by which people at all levels in development and in all strata of society learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies,

Convinced also that human rights education contributes to a concept of development consistent with the dignity of women and men of all ages, which takes into account the diverse segments of society such as children, indigenous peoples, minorities and disabled persons,

Taking into account the efforts to promote human rights education made by educators and non-governmental organizations in all parts of the world, as well as by intergovernmental organizations, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund,

Convinced that each woman, man and child, to realize their full human potential, must be made aware of all their human rights, civil, cultural, economic, political and social,

Believing that human rights education constitutes an important vehicle for the elimination of gender-based discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities through the promotion and protection of the human rights of women,

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2/ Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

3/ Resolution 44/25, annex.

4/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No. 3 (E/1993/23), chap. II, sect. A.

5/ Ibid., 1994, Supplement No. 4 (E/1994/24), chap. II, sect. A.

Considering the World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy, 6/ adopted by the International Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy, convened by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at Montreal from 8 to 11 March 1993, and the statement by the Congress that "education for human rights and democracy is itself a human right, and a prerequisite for the realization of human rights, democracy and social justice,

Recalling that it is the responsibility of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights "to coordinate relevant United Nations education and public information programmes in the field of human rights", 7/

Taking note of the report to the General Assembly of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 8/ in which he declared that human rights education is "essential for the encouragement of harmonious inter-community relations, for mutual tolerance and understanding and finally for peace",

Aware of the experience in human rights education of United Nations peace-building operations, including the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador and the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia,

Bearing in mind the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 9/ adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights at Vienna on 25 June 1993, in particular section II, paragraphs 78 to 82,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on human rights education, submitted in accordance with the request contained in General Assembly resolution 48/127 of 21 December 1993; 10/

2. Proclaims the ten-year period beginning on 1 January 1995 as the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education;

3. Welcomes the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2005, as contained in the report of the Secretary-General; 11/

4. Appeals to all Governments to contribute to the implementation of the Plan of Action and to step up their efforts to eradicate illiteracy and to

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6/ See A/CONF.157/PC/42/Add.6.

7/ Resolution 48/141, para. 4 (e).

8/ A/49/36, para. 94.

9/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

10/ A/49/261 and Add.1.

11/ A/49/261/Add.1, annex.

direct education towards the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;

5. Urges governmental and non-governmental educational agencies to intensify their efforts to establish and implement programmes of human rights education, as recommended in the Plan of Action, in particular by preparing and implementing national plans for human rights education;

6. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to coordinate the implementation of the Plan of Action;

7. Requests the Centre for Human Rights and the Commission on Human Rights, in cooperation with Member States, human rights treaty-monitoring bodies, other appropriate bodies and competent non-governmental organizations, to support efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner to implement the Plan of Action;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to consider establishing a voluntary fund for human rights education, with special provision for the support of the human rights education activities of non-governmental organizations, to be administered by the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat;

9. Invites the specialized agencies and United Nations programmes to contribute, within their respective spheres of competence, to the implementation of the Plan of Action;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all members of the international community and to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights and education;

11. Calls upon international, regional and national non-governmental organizations, in particular those concerned with women, labour, development and the environment, as well as all other social justice groups, human rights advocates, educators, religious organizations and the media, to increase their involvement in formal and non-formal education in human rights and to cooperate with the Centre for Human Rights in implementing a United Nations decade for human rights education;

12. Requests the existing human rights monitoring bodies to place emphasis on the implementation by Member States of their international obligation to promote human rights education;

13. Decides to consider this matter at its fiftieth session under the item entitled "Human rights questions".